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Cults Lead List of Groups 'Not Wanted as Neighbors'

PRINCETON, N.J. — Recent clashes between whites and blacks have underscored the extent of racial intolerance in the U.S. But a new Gallup Poll reveals a broad pattern of prejudice against diverse religious and ethnic minorities and persons with unconventional lifestyles.

Almost half the public, for example, would not like to have members of minority religious sects or cults as neighbors. Also, substantial proportions would be inhospitable to blacks and religious fundamentalists (13% each), unmarried couples (12%), and Hispanics (9%).

Comparatively few in the survey would object to living next door to Jews (3%), Protestants (2%) or Catholics (1%). One respondent in eight (12%) would have no objection to any of these groups as neighbors while three in 10 (29%) do not express opinions.

Hostility toward religious cults has grown significantly in recent years. In a 1981 survey 30% said they would not welcome cult members as neighbors; currently 44% would not.

Black and Hispanic respondents are less apt than whites to object to cults, but their views about the other minority groups are similar to whites.

Regional Differences

Southern whites tend to be less tolerant than whites living in other parts of the country in their acceptance of blacks, singles and Hispanics. Almost one-fourth of Southern whites (23%), compared to 10% of whites outside the South, for example, would object to having black neighbors. In the case of unmarried couples, the figure for Southern whites is 19%; for white non-Southerners it is 10%. And 13% of Southern whites, but only 8% of non-South whites, would not like to have Hispanics as neighbors. Religious cults and fundamentalists, however, would get about the same reception from whites in every region.

Differences by Education, Age

In general, college graduates exhibit somewhat greater tolerance toward the minority groups included in the survey than do the less well-educated. People aged 50 and over would be less hospitable than those under 50 to unmarried couples.

This question was asked:

This card lists various groups of people. Would you please sort out any that you would not like to have as neighbors?

Following are the latest findings.

Groups Not Wanted as Neighbors

Members of religious sects, cults	44%
Blacks	13
Religious fundamentalists	13
Unmarried couples	12
Hispanics	9
Jews	3
Protestants	2
Catholics	1
None, all are acceptable	12
No opinion	29
	138%*

*Adds to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

The following table compares the latest results with those from a 1981 survey, showing groups that were included in both surveys.

Groups Not Wanted As Neighbors

	1987	1981*
Religious sects, cults	44%	30%
Religious fundamentalists	13	11
Unmarried couples	12	14
Hispanics	9	18
Jews	3	2
Protestants	2	1
Catholics	1	1

*In this survey 25% and 17%, respectively, said they would not want Cuban or Vietnamese refugees as neighbors.

(Continued on following page)

Cults Not Wanted *(continued from page 1)*

The following table shows the latest findings among Southern and non-Southern whites:

Groups Not Wanted As Neighbors
(Responses of whites)

	Total	South	Non-South
Religious sects, cults	46%	47%	45%
Blacks	14	23	10
Religious fundamentalists	13	14	13
Unmarried couples	13	19	10
Hispanics	9	13	8
Jews	3	4	2
Protestants	2	4	1
Catholics	1	2	1
None, all are acceptable	13	9	14
No opinion	27	24	28
	141%	159%	132%

The latest findings are based on in-person interviews with 1,562 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period Jan. 16-19.

50% Believe 'People Like Ourselves' on Other Planets

In a new Gallup survey, 50% express the belief that there are "people somewhat like ourselves living on other planets in the universe," while 34% are skeptical and 16% unsure.

The current figures are virtually unchanged from those recorded in a 1978 survey, but considerably more now than in either 1973 or 1966 believe in extraterrestrial life.

All persons in the survey were asked the following question:

Do you think there are people somewhat like ourselves living on other planets in the universe, or not?

Extraterrestrial Life

	Yes %	No %	Not sure %
1987	50	34	16
1978	51	33	16
1973	46	38	16
1966	34	46	20

The latest findings are based on telephone interviews with 527 adults, 18 and older, conducted in scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period Feb. 2-18. For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 6 percentage points in either direction.

Women, Older Persons Most Likely to be Church Members

In the 1986 Gallup audit of church membership, a higher proportion of women (74%) than men (63%) report being members. Also, membership increases progressively with age, from 61% among 18-24-year-olds to 77% among those 65 and older.

As reported in February, seven in 10 U.S. adults (69%) say they are members of a church or synagogue, as determined by the 1986 Gallup audit.

The 1986 figure statistically matches the 1985 percentage of 71%. The highest figure in the half-century trend occurred in 1947 when 76% said they were church or synagogue members. The lowest was recorded in 1982 when the comparable percentage was 67%.

Education and income do not appear to be important factors, but sharp differences are found by region, with Southerners most likely and Westerners least likely to be members. The same level of membership (68%) is recorded for whites and Hispanics, while membership among blacks is slightly higher (75%). A higher proportion of Catholics (81%) than Protestants (72%) claim membership. The question:

Do you happen to be a member of a church or synagogue?

NATIONAL	69%
Men	63
Women	74
18-24 years	61
25-29 years	65
30-49 years	67
50-64 years	74
65 & older	77
College grads	70
College inc.	68
High school grads	71
Not H.S. grads	65
Whites	68
Hispanics	68
Blacks	75
East	70
Midwest	71
South	74
West	57
$40,000 & over	70
$25,000-$39,999	67
$15,000-$24,999	70
Under $15,000	68
Protestants	72
Catholics	81

The latest membership figures are based on surveys conducted in five selected weeks during 1986. A total of 6,663 adults, 18 and older, were interviewed in person.

Most Teens Admit They Have Cheated on Exams

The majority of teenagers have cheated on exams or tests, but the latest findings from the Gallup Youth Survey also suggest that the practice may be on the decline.

Although 59 percent of the nation's teens say they have ever cheated on an exam or test at school, this proportion represents a seven-percentage point decline since 1981, when two teens in three (66 percent) said they had cheated.

Currently, 22 percent of the teens believe there is a great deal of cheating going on at their school, and an additional 44 percent say there is a fair amount. One teen in three, however, says there is not very much cheating at his school. By comparison, in 1981, 37 percent of the teens thought there was a great deal of cheating, and 39 percent believed there was a fair amount of cheating on tests and exams.

Teens who are 16 or older (73 percent) are far more likely to have cheated on an exam than are those who are 13 to 15 years of age (50 percent). The older teens are also more likely than younger teens to believe there is a great deal of cheating at their school, by a margin of 26 percent to 20 percent.

Young women (72 percent) are more likely than young men (60 percent) to believe there is at least a fair amount of cheating going on at school. More young men (61 percent) than young women (57 percent), however, report that they have cheated on exams or tests.

Surprisingly little difference in cheating is found according to academic performance. Students who say their academic achievements are above average (58 percent) are just about as likely to admit to cheating on tests or exams as are those whose work is average or below average (60 percent). The superior students and academic underachievers also give very similar estimates of the proportions of cheaters found at their schools.

Regionally, teens in the South are the most likely (31 percent) to believe that cheating is widespread at their school, but are the least likely (51 percent) to report that they, themselves, have ever cheated. Two teens in three (66 percent) in the West admit to having cheated, as have 63 percent of the teens in the East and 60 percent in the Midwest.

One teen in five in the West (21 percent) and Midwest (21 percent) believes there is a great deal of cheating at his school. Only 16 percent of teens living in the East say cheating is widespread.

Moral teaching may have some influence on the decision of whether or not to cheat at school. A majority (55 percent) of those who attend church regularly admit to having cheated, but the frequency of cheating is even greater (64 percent) among those who do not attend church services regularly.

Here is how the questions were asked:

At your school, how common is cheating on tests or exams? Would you say there is a great deal, a fair amount, or not very much cheating?

Have you ever cheated on a test or exam?

The findings reported today are based on telephone interviews with a representative national cross section of 528 teenagers, 13 through seventeen, conducted in October through December 1986.

Ever Cheated on an Exam?

	Yes	No
NATIONAL	59%	41%
Male	61	39
Female	57	43
Ages 13 to 15	50	50
Ages 16 to 17	73	27
Above average students	58	42
Average and below	60	40
East	63	37
Midwest	60	40
South	51	49
West	66	34

How Much Cheating on Exams?

	Great deal	Fair amount	Not very much
NATIONAL	22%	44%	33%
Male	20	40	38
Female	25	47	28
Ages 13 to 15	20	44	36
Ages 16 to 17	26	44	29
Above-average students	23	44	32
Average and below	21	44	34
East	16	45	39
Midwest	21	45	34
South	31	39	30
West	21	49	29

No opinion (1 percent, nationally) omitted

Sex Education in Grades 4-8 Soars in Public Acceptance

Americans' acceptance of sex education in their local elementary schools has risen sharply during the last two years, doubtless in response to the AIDS epidemic and the alarming increase in teenage pregnancies. In addition, the vast majority of those favoring sex education for young children feel the curriculum should include discussion of AIDS.

In a new Gallup Poll, 71% express support for sex education classes in grades 4 through 8 of their local public schools while 21% are opposed. As recently as 1985, approval outweighed disapproval by a narrow 52% to 43% margin. And in the Poll's first (1981) assessment, statistically equivalent numbers favored (45%) and opposed (48%) sex education in their elementary schools.

As in past surveys, women, younger adults of both sexes, and persons who attended college are more supportive than are their opposite numbers. But majorities in all population groups now favor sex instruction for young children.

The extent to which AIDS has influenced public opinion on the general topic of sex education is illustrated by the fact that virtually all (upwards of 90%) in every group of those favoring elementary school classes on sex feel discussion about AIDS should be part of the curriculum.

Following are the questions asked and the latest findings:

Do you feel the public elementary schools in this community should or should not teach sex education in grades 4 through 8?

Those who responded affirmatively were asked:

Should this program include discussions about AIDS, or not?

Sex Education in Grades 4-8

	Favor			Oppose	No opinion
		Discuss AIDS			
	Total	Yes	No		
	%	%	%	%	%
NATIONAL	71	67	4	21	8
Men	67	63	4	28	5
Women	74	70	4	16	10
18-29 years	80	74	6	16	4
30-49 years	78	75	3	17	5
50 & older	57	53	4	30	13
Attended college	81	77	4	15	4
No college	64	61	3	25	11

The latest findings are based on telephone interviews with 503 adults, 18 and older, conducted in scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period Feb. 9-25. For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 5 percentage points in either direction. The earlier findings are from surveys conducted by The Gallup Organization for Phi Delta Kappa, the educational fraternity.

Majority Backs Condom Ads on TV

PRINCETON, N.J. — In response to the national epidemic of sexually-transmitted diseases, a two-thirds' majority of Americans approve of their local stations running TV commercials for condoms.

Public backing is higher among younger than older adults — 82% of 18-29-year-olds approve, compared to 57% of persons 50 and older — but opposition does not exceed 30% in any major population group.

Men and women are equally supportive, as are adults in every region of the nation.

Following are the question and the detailed findings:

As you know, there has been considerable discussion lately about ways to prevent sexually-transmitted diseases. In this regard, do you favor or oppose commercials for condoms — that is, male contraceptives — being shown on television in your area?

Condom Commercials on TV

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
	%	%	%
NATIONAL	69	24	7
Men	69	25	6
Women	68	24	8
18-29 years	82	15	3
30-49 years	70	25	5
50 & older	57	30	13

The findings are based on telephone interviews with a national sample of 502 adults conducted March 2-11.

Teens Think Divorce Laws Are Too Lax

The high divorce rate among American adults has apparently led many teens to believe that divorce laws are too lax, according to the latest Gallup Youth Survey.

Eight teens in 10 (79 percent) say it is currently too easy to get a divorce in this country. Only 15 percent believe it is not easy enough, and just 2 percent say the divorce laws are about right. By contrast, in 1984, 75 percent of the teens believed the divorce laws were too liberal; and in 1978, only a bare majority of 55 percent of the teens thought that divorces were too easy to get.

Only one teen in four (25 percent) believes that divorced couples tried hard enough to save their marriages. Taking the opposite view are 72 percent of the teens who say most divorced couples have not tried hard enough. In 1978, 62 percent believed that divorced couples did not work hard enough to save their marriages.

How Easy to Get a Divorce?

	Too easy	About right	Not Easy enough	No opinion
NATIONAL	79%	2%	15%	4%
Male	80	1	14	5
Female	78	2	16	4
Ages 13 to 15	78	1	15	6
Ages 16 to 17	82	2	14	2
Protestant	78	2	16	4
Catholic	80	0	16	4
Attend church regularly	81	1	13	5
Do not attend church regularly	76	2	18	4
East	84	*	12	4
Midwest	75	2	16	7
South	78	1	19	2
West	80	3	12	5

*Less than 0.5 percent

Opposition to the ease of divorce is strongest among those teens who are 16 or 17 years of age, and who may very likely be contemplating their own marriages. Among these older teens, 82 percent say divorces are now too easy to obtain.

Younger teens (ages 13 to 15), however, are only slightly less likely to share the view that divorces are too easy to obtain (78 percent). Teens of all ages are united in their belief that most divorced couples probably did not try hard enough to save their marriages.

Church attendance appears to exert an influence on attitudes toward divorce, with 81 percent of those who attend church regularly saying that divorces are too easy to obtain, compared with 76 percent of non-regular attenders who share this view. Regular church attenders (75 percent) are also more likely than non-regular attenders (67 percent) to believe that divorced couples probably did not work hard enough to save their marriages.

Protestant teens (74 percent) are more likely than Catholic youths (68 percent) to believe that divorced couples did not work hard enough to save their marriages. Protestants (80 percent) and Catholics (78 percent) share the view that divorces are too easy to get.

Regionally, teens from the East are most likely to say that divorces are too easy to get (84 percent), but are least inclined to believe that divorced couples have not tried hard enough to save their marriages (68 percent).

Western teens are the severest critics of divorced couples (75 percent) and also take a hard line against the ease of divorce (80 percent). Teens from the Midwest (75 percent) and South (78 percent) are least likely to believe divorces are too easy to get.

Here is how the questions were asked:

Generally speaking, do you think it is too easy or not easy enough for people in this country to get divorced?

Generally speaking, do you think that most people who get divorced have tried hard enough to save their marriages, or not?

The results reported today are based on telephone interviews with a representative national cross section of 504 teenagers, 13 to 17, conducted in May and June 1986.

Who Do Americans Say That I Am?

By George Gallup, Jr. and George O'Connell

In this intriguing investigation the authors look at the religious values of American Christians. Drawing upon survey material collected for the Schuller organization and other groups, they go beyond mere head counting. Their goal is to ascertain how Americans perceive Jesus Christ in order to understand the impact He has on their lives.

Questions vitally important to the church were asked. Among them:

- What impact has Jesus as a moral and ethical teacher had on your life?
- Where does religion fit into your value system?
- How can the churches better serve you?
- What do you consider to be the most appealing character traits of Jesus?
- How hard have you tried to follow the example of Jesus?

Interviews with representative Americans bring the data down to earth. Additionally, church leaders from various denominations offer suggestions for infusing new life into the churches.

As Robert H. Schuller writes in an Afterword, "The polls and other evidence suggest that many Americans are not being served adequately by their churches even as surveys suggest that the interest in spiritual values has increased." This book contains "possibilities and insights that will benefit the Christian community."

This intriguing investigation of religious values offers significant and timely information for church officials, pastors, and educators — anyone concerned with increasing the effectiveness of church ministry. Paper, $10.95

Available at your local bookstore or direct from the publisher (please include $1.00 per book for postage and handling): THE WESTMINSTER PRESS, 925 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

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